

with us, and although Brother Lewis was very weak after his ordeal, we had an enjoyable time together and all felt to thank the Lord for His mercies.

Notwithstanding the fact that a great deal of prejudice is held toward us, we find a very hospitable class of people, many of whom are anxiously seeking for the Gospel light.

The names of the Elders laboring in this conference at present are as follows: Joseph J. Richardson, James W. Anderson, Daniel T. Hawkley, Edmund Lovell, Richard N. Lund, Charles Anderson, Byron H. Allred Jr., Samuel Linton Jr. and your correspondent,

WILLIAM R. PALMER.

Coalgate, Indian Territory, March 4, 1898.

## IN THE TOWN OF IPSWICH.

Ipswich, Mass., March 6, 1898.

Elder Geo. W. Esplin and myself were assigned to labor in the historic town of Ipswich, formerly Agawam, at our conference held at Cambridge, Mass., on the 20 and 21 of November, 1897, which as far as we could learn was the first conference held in New England for about 45 years by Latter-day Saints. We arrived in this quaint old town on the afternoon of the 29th in a rainstorm. We were not long in finding room and also a temporary friend, both of which, however, were of short duration. We then dedicated the place unto the Lord and called upon the selectmen of the town, as we desired to procure the town hall in which to hold a meeting. They promptly informed us that we could not have it without paying for it. We then asked them what would be the price stated that we were preaching the Gospel without money and without price, as did the disciples of our blessed Lord. They said they would let us know through the mail that evening, so we called at the office and found that we could have the hall by paying six dollars for one afternoon meeting. We now went in search of a more reasonable hall, and finally secured the Daman hall for two dollars. We next visited the two newspapers. These promised to give notice of our meeting, and we went on our way rejoicing. However, the adversary soon appeared. When we had been tracing a few days an article appeared in one of the papers, as a warning to the people of Ipswich. It was signed by the ministers of the town, Catholic, Methodist, Episcopal, Baptist and Congregational. The consequence was the papers broke their word, and did not give notice of the meeting. We had an attendance of about thirty persons. Several of whom were boys who came out of curiosity. But the Lord has been with us. We have several friends and soon found a permanent place to stop in. The kind people reduced our rent one-third after the second week, though there has been all manner of false reports circulated about us and our people. The prospects for the future are promising, we are having many conversations and there is scarcely a day but what we have a cottage meeting, and sometimes more than one. We are now tracing the town the third time, the tract being sued for this is entitled Distinguishing Characteristics of Mormonism, by Elder A. P. Kesler. I here submit a copy of a comment which it has brought out in one of the local papers: "The two Mormon Elders who have already spent several months here endeavoring to instruct the wayward Ipswich resident (from minister to layman) are again distributing tracts whose purport is that the so-called Christian ministers do not preach real Bible truth. They may be a Daniel—a second Daniel come to judgment as Shakespeare says, but people here

seem to be rather shy of these Mormon Daniels."

Though there is still much prejudice we feel that it is much less than when we came to the town. We rejoice in our labors and in the restoration of the Gospel, and our greatest desire is to have the Spirit of the Lord with us.

JOSEPH WALLACE,  
GEO. W. ESPLIN.

## ITEMS OF HISTORY

Under date of the 10th inst., Mr. Job T. Smith of Harrisburg, Utah, writes as follows to the "News":

I herewith at his request forward to you the statement of the aged veteran Elijah Thomas, in relation to items concerning the Mormon Battalion and the ship Brooklyn's company in California, and their arrival in Salt Lake City. The old man is 83 years of age, but he avers that every word of the statement is as true as the Book of Mormon, and are matters that he has never seen in print, and of which he desires to leave his testimony for publication.

He used to be a prominent figure in Salt Lake City, but is now becoming quite feeble. I have written it up for him. I have also in my possession some rhymes, written concerning the same period and circumstances by a member of the Battalion, named Daniel Dennett. They are partly historical, sentimental and funny, corroborating, however, Thomas's narrative. Following are samples, speaking of the time they left off mining to travel to Salt Lake:

We have grown poor by lifting gold,

But I think we shall outgrow it;

Many a thousand we have sold,

But we don't want folks to know it.

It is poor trash in the best of times.

It never will make us crazy;

It never will urge us into crimes,

We stay by it too lazy.

Following is the statement of Elijah Thomas referred to:

"Five hundred young and middle-aged men of the traveling camps of the Nauvoo exile emigration were enlisted under Col. Allen about the middle of July, 1846, to serve for one year in the army of the United States in its war with Mexico, and marched to Fort Leavenworth, where the colonel dying, march was made to Santa Fe, under Col. Smith from thence under Col. P. St. George Cooke to San Luis Rey, Lower California; arriving there on the second day of February, 1847.

"Remaining at that place until April, I made it a practice to pray privately every morning after the battalion services and some time during the latter month at one of these devotions I received a remarkable vision, wherein it was shown to me that our company of men, when discharged, would find a gold mine, which would be the means of gathering Saints from the sea coast to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, and effect other purposes of a great and revolutionary character. In this connection, speaking of the Great Salt Lake, before a Mormon had ever seen it, I call to mind that Brigham Young at the time of our enlistment, and before commencing our march, on the banks of the Missouri river, near Council Bluffs, addressed us in a prophetic and encouraging mood and told us: 'You will likely be discharged about the 16th of July a year hence on the Pacific coast, at which time I wish you to organize yourselves under the leadership of Levi W. Hancock, and meet me and the pioneer Saints in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.'

"He said these words in confidence to the departing recruits, inasmuch as up to that time few, if any, of the traveling companies had any idea of

where would be their final stopping place; but it had been shown to him in prophetic vision. As anticipated, we were discharged on the 16th day of July, numbering at that time 340. Sixty of the number re-enlisted for another six months. One hundred and sixty organized under Levi W. Hancock, and journeyed northward and eastward to the headwaters of the Truckee river on the way towards the Great Basin. At this point three messengers were met, Brown, Brannan and Smith, one of them bearing a letter from President Brigham Young dated at Green river, where that gentleman had been seen on his way with the Utah Pioneers toward the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

"This letter contained a request that should the discharged members of the Mormon Battalion be met on their way eastward, all those who had no families in the advancing companies or elsewhere, should return west to the coast country, on account no doubt of anticipated scarcity of provisions during the succeeding winter, in the Salt Lake valley.

Forty-two of us returned and traveled as far west as Captain Sutter's, where the city of Sacramento now stands.

"Being now in search of employment, three of our number were deputed, consisting of Allen, Fyfield and myself, to obtain and settle upon a contract which the captain desired to let for building certain mills, etc.

"Terms were soon agreed upon for building a flouring mill near the base of the Sierra Nevada mountains, a canal requiring to be cut three miles long, fourteen feet wide, and five feet deep, and a dam built across the American Fork river; canal and dam to furnish water for running the proposed flouring mill. Also for the construction of a saw mill with its race, some thirty miles higher up the river in the mountains, and a tan-yard near his office.

"In the latter part of January, 1848, a few grains of gold had been found by Mr. Marshall (the foreman) and nine of our company who were working in the saw mill race. Our contract on the flouring mill, etc., being nearly fulfilled, prospecting began and in March following two men named Willis and Hudson, penetrated fifteen miles up the river in a search. Here they found gold in abundance, collecting in some instances as much as three hundred dollars' worth in a day, and men afterwards averaging as high as fifty dollars per day. The rumor of this discovery reaching the Mormon company which had arrived in San Francisco in the ship Brooklyn, thirteen barges were chartered and two hundred persons conveyed in them up the Sacramento and American Fork rivers to the site of the new diggings, to a place subsequently named Mormon Island, where they all commenced taking out gold. William Glover of the Brooklyn company, who had been previously elected mayor of San Francisco, erected the first tent in the new mining camp, which up to that time had consisted of the few members of the battalion company who had previously been working for Sutter. Elijah Thomas set up the second tent.

"At the time Samuel Bannan of the Brooklyn company purchased of Willis and Hudson a one-third interest in their supposed right of discovery; and the new firm made a claim upon all the diggers for one-third of all their gains as a tribute or tax, in favor of the original discoverers. This was paid, however, only a few days.

"About the 1st of October, 1848, I was selected by about twenty-two families of the Brooklyn Saints, and some remaining members of the bat-